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The Marathon Mystery

A Story of Manhattan

By BURTON E. STEVENSON
Author of "The Holladay Case"

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(Continued from Friday)

"Let you out of where?"

"Out of the closet. You see, unfortunately, this lock works only from the outside, so you'll have to lock me in before you go. I've put on the bolt as an extra precaution."

"You mean you're going to spend the whole morning in that closet?"

"That's precisely what I mean."

"But you'll suffocate."

"No—you see I've cut a hole through. That will let in the air; besides, through it one can get an admirable view of the outer room."

"Ah!" I said, beginning to understand. "It's a trap!"

"Yes, a trap. Maybe we'll catch something and maybe we won't. What time do you usually go to lunch?"

"About 1 o'clock."

"That ought to bring you here by 1:30. Very well; lock me in and take the key with you."

I did as he bade me, though not without some reluctance, and I confess that I thought of little else during the morning.

One o'clock came at last and I hurried out and took the elevated uptown as the quickest way of getting there. It was just 1:20 when I opened my door. With a little shiver of apprehension I inserted the key in the lock of the closet and threw back the bolt. Godfrey walked out on the instant. He was smiling, but pale with fatigue.

"If you've got such a thing as a nip or a ready anywhere about, Lester," he said, sinking into the nearest chair, "I'd be infinitely obliged to it. I feel rather shaky in the knees."

I brimmed a glass for him, and he set it down empty, with a sigh of satisfaction.

"That's better. Do you know, I thought for a time toward the last that I was going to collapse. One little crack is scarcely ventilation enough for an active pair of lungs. However, I was right."

"You were?"

"Yes," and he smiled at my impudence. "I'll tell you the story and see what you make of it. First came the chambermaid, who performed her duties with neatness and dispatch. Then a dreary half hour passed. I had about come to the conclusion that I might have spared my pains when I caught the sound of a key in the lock of the outer door. I heard the door open and close, and an instant later our friend Tremaine appeared within my range of vision."

"Tremaine!" I exclaimed. "Then he had Thompson's key?"

"Yes," agreed Godfrey. "But my story's only begun. Tremaine took a look through the rooms to assure himself that there was no one here. He tried the closet door, but didn't seem surprised or suspicious when he found it locked. Then he went back to the outer room, dropped on his hands and knees and began to search."

"For the diamonds?"

"So I thought at first. I couldn't see him for a little while, but presently I perceived that he wasn't searching over the body of the carpet, but around its edges. He seemed to be looking for a place where it was loose. For he went very slowly from rack to rack. Once I thought he had found it, for he came to a place where a rack was wanting and ran his hand under eagerly. But in a moment he brought it out again empty."

"It couldn't have been the diamonds," I remarked to myself.

"No, it couldn't have been the diamonds," exclaimed Godfrey, his eyes shining. "But Tremaine wasn't done yet. Really, he'd made an admirable detective. I admired his methods, though they also gave me a clue to what he was looking for. He placed a chair just here, before this desk, just opposite the bedroom door. You'll remember that Thompson also had a table and chair similarly placed."

"You remember?"

"Then he sat down in the chair and began a minute scrutiny of the walls. First that one yonder. He went over it inch by inch, until he came to the sparkling tulle. Then he sprang up and opened it and peered inside, even holding a lighted match to it. Let us see," and Godfrey also examined the tulle.

"It's empty."

"Yes," I said. "I've used it once or twice, and it works all right."

"Well, Tremaine wasn't satisfied with that. He ran his hands along the top ledges of the doors, inspected a chair and peered above the window, examined every nook and cranny. At last he gave it up, reduced things just

watch and went away. Now, what was he looking for?"

I nudged my brain.

"I don't know," I said. "I can't imagine."

"Let me help you," said Godfrey, his eyes shining still more brightly. "I had time to think it all out in the closet there. In the first place, he looked only in the outer room; in the second place, he was plainly looking for something that had been purposely concealed; in the third place, when he examined the room he placed his chair just where Miss Crofton had sat."

A flash of light burst upon me.

"The clippings," I cried.

"The clippings. Just that. I haven't the least doubt of it. And that explains another thing which seemed very puzzling. It explains why Miss Crofton was so anxious to rent this suit."

"But how did he find out about them?" I asked at last.

"I think they contain some secret of his, and he's concluded she hasn't got them because she hasn't produced them against him. And he's reasoned correctly in supposing that if she hasn't got them she must have hidden them here."

It was a good guess; an almost sure.

"The question is," added Godfrey, looking at him, "where did she hide them?"

CHAPTER XL

WHEN I left the office at noon next day I took a cross town car which eventually landed me at the foot of West Tenth street, where the red and black steamers of the Quebec line had and unload their West Indian cargoes. I had found by reference to a file of the Maritime Gazette that the Parina had arrived on Feb. 23 and had sailed again on the 25th of March, and the paper of the day before showed me that she had just arrived in port again.

I hunted up the purser without delay.

"May I see your passenger list for your last trip north?" I asked, "the trip before this one?"

"Certainly," he responded, and produced it.

It was not a long one, and in a moment I had found what I was looking for. Victor Tremaine and wife were fifth on the list. But no "H. Thompson" appeared there. However, I had a last resource. I had scarcely expected to find him entered among the passengers.

"Is the captain aboard?" I inquired.

"Captain Hake has gone over to his home on Long Island for a day or two," answered the purser. "The first officer, Mr. Grace, is forward, superintending the unloading."

"Thank you," I said, and hurried up to the deck. I found Mr. Grace without difficulty, a tall, blond young man, with eyes of a cerulean hue. "Can you spare me a moment?" I asked, after I had introduced myself.

"Why, I guess so. What is it?"

"Did you ever see this man before?" I produced the photograph Godfrey had given me.

"Well, I should say so," he cried at the first glance. "And I hope I'll never see him again. Thompson's name is, and we shipped him at Baltimore, in place of one of our men who deserted there. He didn't have a decent rag on his back, so we fitted him up with some old things out of the ship chest."

I nodded.

"He only shipped as far as St. Pierre," continued the mate, "but after we'd got there he changed his mind and came on to New York. What he's been doing's getting into more trouble. He's not been out of jail more than three or four weeks."

"Out of jail?"

"Yes. He was a regular fiend for booze, though we didn't find it out until after we left St. Pierre. When he got it I don't know. He didn't have any money to buy it, that's sure. I've kind of thought one of the passengers must have given it to him, though I can't imagine why. But, anyway, he was half drunk three-fourths of the time and dead drunk the other fourth. We'd find him lying in his berth and we'd yank him out and drop him into a tub of water. He'd sober up quicker in any man I ever saw, but he was never satisfied unless he had a pint or two inside him. When we tied up at the wharf here he got awful bad. Wanted it go ashore right away. Fought the captain when he wouldn't let him. The captain landed him over to a policeman, and he roared twenty days on the island."

(To Be Continued)

BULLETIN ADS. PAY

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Prepared by Dr. J. C. Ayer & Co., Lowell, Mass., U.S.A.

Legal Notices.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE UNITED STATES FOR THE TERRITORY OF HAWAII.

Whereas, A libel was filed in the District Court of the United States for the Territory of Hawaii on the 21st day of February, A. D. 1937, by Henry Withoff, libellant, versus the American Barkentine "Fullerton," her tackle, apparel, furniture, engines, boilers, machinery, boats, appurtenances, cargo and freight money, and against all persons intervening for their interests therein, libelee, in a cause of damages, civil and maritime, to recover the sum of \$50,000, as by said libel, reference being hereby made thereto, will more fully and at large appear.

Now, Therefore, in pursuance of the motion and under the seal of the court to me directed and delivered, I do hereby give public notice to all persons claiming the said American Barkentine "Fullerton," her tackle, apparel, furniture, engines, boilers, machinery, boats, appurtenances, cargo and freight money, etc., or in any manner interested therein, that they be and appear before the said District Court, to be held in the City of Honolulu, on Friday, the 1st day of March, A. D. 1937, at ten o'clock in the forenoon of that day, provided the same shall be a day of jurisdiction; otherwise on the next day of jurisdiction thereafter, there and then to interpose their claims and make their allegations in that behalf, otherwise default and condemnation will be ordered.

Dated the 21st day of February, A. D. 1937.

E. R. HENDRY,
U. S. Marshal.
R. A. Douthett and Geo. D. Gear,
Proctors for libellant.

Feb. 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS.

ESTATE OF JAMES W. GIRVIN, DECEASED.

The undersigned, William O. Smith, Administrator of the Estate of James W. Girvin, deceased, hereby gives notice to all persons having claims against the estate of said decedent to present the same to him at his office in the Judd Building, in Honolulu, Oahu, Territory of Hawaii, within six months from the date of the first publication of this notice, whether such claims be secured or not, or they will be forever barred.

Dated, Honolulu, Oahu, T. H., Jan. 28th, 1937.

WILLIAM O. SMITH,
Administrator of the Estate of said James W. Girvin, deceased.

3601—Jan. 28; Feb. 4, 11, 18, 25.

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